

## Game Management Advisory Council Meeting Notes

June 3, 2017

WCA Boardroom  
1301 N Dolarway Road  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

**Members in Attendance:** Jake Weise, Dave Duncan, Jerry Barron, Art Meikel, Warren Gimlin, BJ Thorniley, James Horan, James Stephenson, Jan Patricio, Lee Davis, Mark Pidgeon, Shawn McCully

**WDFW Employees:** Richard Harris, Anis Aoude, Ciera Strickland, Delores Noyes, Trent Roussin

**Welcome and Introduction:** Jake called the meeting to order and introductions were made all around. Meeting notes from the previous meeting were approved.

### Agenda Items:

#### Sheep and Pronghorn Update – Rich Harris:

- Pronghorn
  - Rich Harris gave a presentation regarding historical and current population statuses, relocation efforts, report findings, future implications and general information on Pronghorn in the State of Washington
    - Questions were raised about minimal counts, type of land ownership where these populations are occurring, illegal harvest
    - Comments were made about the historical aspects of pronghorn populations, such as 2 pronghorns harvested in 1905 and causing issues for ranchers (complaints) in the late 1960s, observed migratory patterns and potentially a major reason for past reintroduction failures – predation on fawns; predator control.
- Bighorn
  - Rich Harris gave a second presentation regarding bighorn management in Washington State. This included current population status, genetic diversity, increased sensitivity to predation, implications of management on genetics of populations (California vs. Rocky Mtn), current initiatives, disease (pneumonia, M. Ovi bacteria), probability of bighorn encountering and travelling through grazing allotments, breeding program for sheep and eventually goats,
    - Questions were raised in regards to future implications and what the meaning of having a slightly higher level of heterozygosity than the populations studied in Oregon – what does this metric mean for management procedures?

- Is there any way to examine immunity levels when performing these genetic studies? Current work being done at WSU in Pullman – ongoing research.
- Comments regarding Yakama reservation population to provide future stock if needed.
- Plans for Chelan Butte? More harvest within this herd, Rich Harris suggested making this specific suggestion part of the 3 year season setting process.
- Question regarding work with large producers to migrate to disease free domestic herds.
- Changing of grazing allotments from sheep to cattle Yakama, working closer with livestock producers to make the difference in regards to disease transmission and overall conservation. Working with livestock producers will be crucial. Comingling between domestic and wild species allow for these risks. The answer is collaboration.
- Commissioners meeting in Spokane – total estimate of moose. Working on publishing documentation with this information. Moose population impacted by numerous factors besides hunting pressures.

#### **Points Subcommittee Report – Shawn McCully:**

- Shawn provided an overview of the points and draw system in Idaho. Idaho decreases the number of choices, but this increases your odds. In contrast, Washington allows multiple choices, perhaps with decreased odds.
  - What kind of changes can be made to improve the overall system for Washingtonians?
  - The concept of “Point Creep” was discussed – overall odds in the point system
    - Point Creep is deterring hunter recruitment, retention and re-engagement (R3)
    - How do we retain hunters who realize the concept of “Point Creep”?
    - Every state has a Point Creep
    - Examples of Bull Elk, Sheep shared
    - Mimicking a random draw at this point
    - Illusion of the opportunity to draw as time goes on, statistically it is decreasing
    - Is our current points and draw system assisting with R3, or is it hindering R3?
    - How do we maintain funding for the department if the structure changes?
    - Proposed quantifiable changes/alternatives were discussed
  - Future Actions for GMAC?
    - Consensus on problem statement
    - Provide suggestions, run the numbers and analyze the results
    - Determine funding outcomes

- More discussion

### **Process to approve ADA devices for hunting – Delores Noyes:**

- Delores Noyes gave a presentation on the ADA program and her role in aiding disabled citizens take part in recreational activities across the state, including hunting. Specifically, recognizing hunting devices for ADA hunters.
  - Review of applications, documents/forms and definitions/categories
    - Special Use Permit – in depth to assess and validate disability
  - Road Access Program – only state in the country that has this program
  - Need to provide tags based upon the extent of disability of the individual (categories based upon disability status) – Centralia Mine currently the best tag available for disabled citizens (damage tag)
  - Specific hunting blind designs/fishing ramps and docks/pods/piers, wildlife viewing areas
  - Disabled hunters harvest fewer than 1% of the total harvested species – important to provide the opportunities and the appropriate hunting devices is important
  - ADA Advisory Committee
  - Adaptive devices for hunting are shown and described
  - Multi-state collaboration for ADA and Outdoor Recreation Website
  - Air bow discussion
    - Didn't consult Archery groups
    - Air gun with different projectile?
    - Classification? Archery/Firearm/Other?
    - Anis will work with Delores and Shawn/groups to move forward

### **Wolf Update – Trent Roussin:**

- Trent gave a brief presentation regarding wolf current wolf monitoring and management statuses.
  - 2016, 20 confirmed packs
    - Currently growing roughly 30% per year
    - 10 successful breeding pairs
  - 2017 – currently caught 9 wolves in 9 packs, 7 uncollared packs
  - Predator-Prey Project
    - 4/6 packs currently collared
    - Priority – at least one collar in each pack
  - Depredation in 2016
    - 4/20 packs depredated livestock
  - Questions:
    - Smackout pack movement
    - Loop Loop pack seems to have shifted territory somewhat
    - Is average pack size consistent with the level of dispersers?

- Any sign of profanity peak in Sherman creek?
- Diamond pack wandered into Idaho – has it come back?
- Did the pack west of Walla Walla return to Oregon?
- Have there been any reliable sightings south of I-90?
- Discussion:
  - Dispersal rate is high
  - Average pack size 5.1 wolves
    - Most dispersals seen within a year
  - Oregon packs may be shifting northward

### **3 year season setting process – Anis:**

- Anis described the season setting project plan and further discussed the process and future actions
  - GMAC specific items for consideration and proposal
    - GMAC body recommendations as opposed to individuals
      - Point/Draw System
        - Continue to review and possibly revise
        - Timing of implementation/proposal/suggestion
          - Is this for this 3 year setting package, or next?
          - What does it look like for this year's season setting?
            - Heads up for Commission
            - By next meeting have a general statement that starts the conversation – puts it in motion
            - GMAC is in favor of moving forward on this matter
  - Find time to educate and illustrate the current issues to the stakeholders/public (draw/points)
  - Subcommittee actions:
    - Data
    - Refine presentation
    - Opportunity to present/be present at the public meetings and educate the public
    - Additional members?
    - Motion from Jan Patricio for subcommittee to meet with Commission to present findings and information - 1<sup>st</sup> from Bobby Thorniley and 2<sup>nd</sup> from Dave Duncan.
  - Anis and Jake will be working together to gain departmental support
  - Anis will run this by AD for support
- Anis opened the floor for 3 year season suggestions
  - Simplification of the process (general) – remove WACS/RCW's - simplify

- Jake Weise – There are some enforcement WACs that are detrimental to the general population WAC specifically (232-12-021) - the import of Sheep, Cougar, Goat and Bear to Washington. Specifically 1(a) and 1(b)
  - GMAC recommends amending these two sections of the aforementioned WAC.
- Jake Weise - WAC 232-12-284 The possession of picked up horns and the transfer of horns
  - Conservation benefit of allowing this
  - Enforcement may be opposed
  - Rich Harris against – unanimous opposition by district biologists as a conservation measure. Possibility to open the door to poaching
  - No position from GMAC
- Shawn McCully wants to see cameras/visual equipment be allowed on bows
  - Shawn makes a motion to allow the use of camera mounted bows Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, Bobby 2<sup>nd</sup> - unanimous
- Bobby suggested making hunting regulations pamphlet (separation) – may not require rule change
- Art Meikel (support for Kevin Robinette), suggests using the Master Hunters and giving the opportunity for youth for problem turkey issues.
  - Solving NE Washington Turkey overpopulation (not 101) – more hens during fall season (youth permits) take away from depredation and give them to hunters.
  - Too much money for three tags
  - Suggest combo with two hens and a gobbler tag
  - GMAC supports this issue
- Lee Davis - Colockum Elk herd:
  - Too much pressure on the herd
    - Remove general muzzleloader season (leave tags?)
    - Remove late archery season
    - Herd needs that break
  - Dave Duncan – too many depredation tags along I-90
    - Hunter Tags cut down
    - Hunters, youth and the public hunting more opportunity and decrease depredation
  - Anis - herd at objective
    - Private land – access issues
    - Allocation subcommittee for specific GMU/area issues
      - Jake and Anis will discuss location/specifics
- Bobby – proposal to extend to April 30 (trapping season) – Eastside for all furbearers
  - Reasoning - Nuisance control problem
    - This would allow the average trapper to aid with some of these issues

- Still prime fur even April 30
    - Mostly Beaver, Rats
  - Dave Duncan 2<sup>nd</sup> – GMAC support
- Art Meikel – LHP program
  - Anis – subcommittee currently looking at the LHP program
    - Tightening up guidelines and transferring them into WAC
    - Only 7 currently
  - Motion to support the LHP program (Art Meikel) – make the program work - revisions
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Mark Pidgeon
- Bobby – emergency rule making, used less in wildlife rather than fish – review
  - Changes communicated more clearly

**Alternative wildlife funding sources – Anis:**

- Anis gave a brief presentation regarding the Conservation taskforce. Managing species that aren't hunted.
  - Goal to find other groups besides hunters and anglers to fund some of these conservation efforts
  - Bobby suggests having more than one serving on this taskforce to support our objectives – supported by group
    - Who else is willing to join this taskforce as a member of GMAC?
    - Movement to petition additional member to join this taskforce
      - 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bobby - vote
      - Anis will send out an email soliciting response
      - Lee requests having someone separate as a GMAC representative
        - Vote: unanimous

**General/Wrap-Up/Comments/Discussion:**

- None.

**Potential Agenda Items for next Meeting**

- 3- year season setting
- DFW funding source – budget (wildlife program)
- Request – Carrie Lowe or Mike Atamian – Lincoln Cliffs

August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017 was decided for the next GMAC meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned**